

# **Mobile Phone/Electronic Devices Policy**

## **Introduction and Rationale**

The possession and use of mobile phones and smart devices, e.g. wearables and smartwatches by school pupils is now extensive, even in the primary school sector. Our core business of teaching and learning needs to be conducted in an environment free from unnecessary distractions or disruptions. Mobile phones, smartwatches and personal devices can be used to cause discipline problems or as a means of bullying others. The capacity of many devices to take photographs, make video or sound recordings could lead to child protection and data protection issues with regard to inappropriate capture, use or distribution of images. In order to manage the issue of mobile phones, and other personal devices, this policy has been developed.

## **Relationship to Our School Ethos**

The use of personal mobile/smart phones and other electronic devices contravenes the provision of a safe and secure school environment, a provision that is central to the mission statement and ethos of St. Joseph's National School, Mell.

## **Aims of Policy**

To inform all members of our school community about the use and access to mobile phones and electronic devices by pupils during the school day.

To outline the procedures and processes of this policy.

## **School Procedures**

- The use of personal mobile/smart phones and other personal devices by children who attend the school is not allowed while the children are in the care of the school staff, while at school, in the school yard, on trips from the school or involved in extra-curricular activities. The children should, therefore, not

bring mobile phones and other personal devices to school or when engaging in school-related activities.

- The only exception to this is where a parent has sought the permission of the Principal and has prior approval of the Principal.
- A child who ignores this policy and brings a mobile phone or an electronic device to school, whether he/she uses it or not, will be required to hand over such a device to a member of staff and it will be stored in the School Office.
- A child who ignores this policy will receive a warranted sanction as per our Code of Behaviour. Repeatedly ignoring this policy will be considered a serious misbehaviour (as per our Code of Behaviour).
- Parents will be required to collect the mobile phone or electronic device from the Principal by the end of the school day. Phones/devices will **not be returned to children** should a parent call the school asking us to do so.
- Use of these devices for the recording of pupils or staff members will be deemed a serious or gross misbehavior (as per our Code of Positive Behaviour) and will receive the warranted sanction as a result.
- The Principal will ask that any recordings made of school related activities be deleted before the electronic device will be released to the parents.
- Children who need to contact home during school hours may do so only through the School Office with the permission of their class teacher.
- Parents are reminded that in cases of emergency, the School Office remains the first point of contact and can ensure that your child is reached quickly and a message passed onto them. You can contact the school via telephone on 041 9833990 or email: [office@mellns.ie](mailto:office@mellns.ie) or Aladdin. Please do not contact your child directly while they are in school on a mobile device.

**In the event that a parent thinks that their child having a phone/smartwatch/electronic device in school is essential, the following will apply:**

- Parents must send the Principal a letter or email requesting that their child be permitted to bring his/her mobile phone or electronic device to school. The letter or email should be addressed to the Principal, stating specifically why the child requires an electronic device to be brought into school .

- This letter or email will be kept on file. This is an **annual** process of application.
- The phone/device must be turned off at all times throughout the school day and stored in the pupil's bag. St. Joseph's National School, Mell, accepts no liability for phones & devices that are lost/stolen/damaged.
- The school will not be liable for replacing mobile phones or other devices that are lost, stolen or damaged. All devices are brought to school at the owner's risk. i.e. the parent of the child.
- If a pupil uses a mobile phone or personal device to take photographs, video footage or recording of other pupils or staff members, or shares inappropriate messages disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with the School's Code of Positive Behaviour.
- If a member of staff has any suspicion that a mobile phone has unsuitable material stored on it, students will be required to hand over the phone for further investigation. Where there is a suspicion that the material on the mobile may provide evidence relating to a criminal offence the phone will be handed over to the Gardaí. Parents will be informed in such circumstances.

**It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone/personal device to menace, harass or offend another person. As such, if action as sanctioned by the School in this regard is deemed ineffective, as with all such incidents, the School may consider it appropriate to involve the Gardaí.**

### **School Trips and Outings**

Students are not permitted to bring mobile phones and other personal devices with them on school trips and tours. Teachers will contact parents via Aladdin App/Phone if it is necessary to make contact with a parent/guardian.

A copy of the Mobile Phone and Devices Policy is made available to school personnel and to the Parents' Council. The policy is readily accessible to parents on request.

A copy of this Policy is also published on the school website.

## **Ratification and Communication**

This policy will be presented to the Board of Management for ratification and reviewed periodically. A copy will be made available to the Parents' Council of Mell School.

### **Ratified by the**

Board of Management of St. Joseph's N.S.

**On 01/09/2025**

Signed: 

Chairperson – on behalf of the Board

Signed: 

Principal

